



GOVERNOR GRETCHEN WHITMER

INVESTING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



Governor Whitmer is focused on delivering for rural families, communities, and small businesses. She will work with anyone to lower the cost of child care, build more housing, empower rural economic development, and make high-speed internet more accessible.

Fostering economic growth in rural communities

- [Created and funded](#) the [Office of Rural Development](#) to support rural economic growth.
- Signed bills to [boost the food and agriculture industry](#) by ensuring Michigan food and agriculture businesses can export their products to other nations.
- Made infrastructure [investments to support the agriculture economy](#) generating \$187 million in investment and supporting 145 jobs.
- [Signed budgets](#) investing more than \$76 million in food and agriculture economic development projects and agricultural climate resiliency to help farmers implement regenerative agriculture, support agriculture supply chains, invest in minority owned food and agriculture ventures, and more.
- Invested over \$53 million in Michigan State University's [dairy center and greenhouses](#).
- [Opened](#) the hemp market to Michigan's producers, bringing a new commodity to Michigan's diverse agricultural market.

Investing in infrastructure

- Through the end of this construction season, fixed 20,000 lane miles of road and 1,400 bridges, supporting 89,000 jobs.
- Invested over \$4 billion to upgrade water infrastructure, supporting 57,000 jobs.
- Made historic investments in affordable housing to build 2,000 affordable, attainable rental housing units, and leverage \$380 million in private funding.
- Connected more than 23,000 unserved families, small businesses, and communities to high-speed internet, with a goal to [connect everyone by the end of the second term](#).
- Increased funding to support [local conservation districts](#) and [farmers](#) implement conservation practices.
- Created the [Food and Agricultural Housing Task Force](#) to address the impediment housing has had on rural economic development.

Expanding access to childcare, education, and skills

- Put Michigan students first with [\\$9,608 per student](#) funding, the highest ever state funding. Raised per-pupil funding by \$1,729 since the taking office, a 22% increase.
- [Closed the funding gap](#), ensuring every school district has the same baseline funding and consistently dedicated more state resources to students with the highest needs.
- Expanded access to free preschool for [22,000+ more four-year olds](#) through Great Start Readiness Program and put Michigan on a path to [Pre-K for all](#). Now, a family of four earning up to \$150,000 is eligible for free preK.
- Funded programs like [Reconnect](#), [Futures for Frontliners](#), and [Michigan Opportunity Scholarship](#) to provide hundreds of thousands of Michiganders tuition-free higher education or skills training that leads to a high-skill, good-paying job.
- [Signed a budget](#) investing \$15 million to recruit and retain educators in rural areas.

Expanding access to health services

- Extended [Healthy Michigan](#) to [over 1 million people](#), and [eliminated red tape](#), lowering costs for working families.
- Expanded access to [telemedicine](#) and required all insurers to [cover telehealth](#).
- Established the [Michigan Opioids Task Force](#), secured [\\$80 million in federal funding](#) to combat the opioid crisis, and supported Attorney General Nessel's work to sue major opioid distributors and win a [historic \\$800 million settlement](#).
- Secured [funding to respond to mental stress](#) and fatigue of Michigan farmers and agricultural workers and their families.
- Created the [Food Security Council](#) to identify opportunities to reduce food insecurity.